

Tourism Migration in South Africa: Current Dynamics, Immediate Challenges and Future Prospects

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the tourism migration within the South African context, thereby focusing on the current dynamics, challenges and future prospects. Tourism and migration are significant towards globalisation. Almost all countries have jumped on the tourism bandwagon as a result of the positive economic benefits that include improving the balance of payments, attracting foreign exchange, and increasing state coffers through the taxation of non-residents. South Africa has also adopted tourism into the developmental policies. Although Africa's share of the global tourism market remains less than 10%, the continental bodies such as the African Union under the wing NEPAD recognises that tourism and migration as an important factor to societies. This paper adopts the content analysis to address the tourism migration, dynamics, challenges and future prospects as a critical phenomenon. Tourism has deep characteristics of a plantation economy that does not benefit the majority of the societies, particularly in South Africa. Despite being a geographical dispersed country, the tourism industry in South Africa faces numerous challenges such as the integration of Black South Africans as product owners; reported high rates of crimes, lack of integration of locals in the tourism industry, the lack of aviation competition, paucity of ports of entry, and most recently the cyber-crime and the visa regulations etc. However, South African tourism remains resilient as a major destination due to its fauna and flora and increasing market niches are developing such as adventure tourism, health tourism and volunteer tourism. South Africa plans to be one of the top 20 destinations by 2020; steps are in place to ensure that South Africa achieves this objective.

KEYWORDS

African Migration, Black Economic Empowerment, Economic Development, Leakage, Regional Tourism, Rural Tourism, Terrorism, Urbanisation, Xenophobia

INTRODUCTION

Tourism as an Economic Activity

The tourism industry has established itself as one of the leading industries in the world and is promoted for its economic benefits. Tourism economy is not an independent autonomous entity but is intricately woven with the social and political fabric of society (Bailey & Richardson; 2010). It is the industry that cuts across other sectors, which make it difficult to estimate (Harrison, 1992, p 15). Tourism has the ability to improve the balance of payments of a country, as countries can

benefit through foreign exchange as a result of the nature and the characteristic of tourism product offerings. Tourists undertake travel to a destination and import their foreign exchange into the destination country, just like an exported product. Since tourism is like an export product consumed at the destination area, it is essentially a service which is intangible and is simultaneously produced and consumed at the destination. Majority of the value adding happens at the destination area, which means that if a destination uses pro-poor principles, there would be less economic leakage from the local economy. The growth of tourism at a destination area may lead towards an inward migration of tourists and labour to that local area. Therefore, tourism promotion has a fiscal benefit to a country due to an increase in government's income which can be used to benefit the citizens. This increases the ability of the state to create tourist infrastructure that can be used by both tourists and residents, such as increased police officers, bigger roads, and better infrastructure and super-structure. As a result, tourism plays a critical role to tourism development.

According to Torres (2003, p547) "tourism development is also often associated with increased demand for imported food, resulting in foreign exchange leakage and competition with local production. The potential for tourism to promote local agricultural production is widely recognised. However, the integration of local agriculture must be a concerted step as part of the tourism development master plan for a destination, to ensure that tourism benefits and raises the standard of living of locals. Integrating the local economy with the tourism industry is important to improve the developmental ability of the tourism industry, especially for small scale farmers. When locals benefit from the tourism industry, they become better hosts for tourists, due to the value domain. Pillay & Rogerson (2013) noted that there are poor linkages between tourism and other sectors and much must be done by tourism planners to ensure that there is as little as possible leakage from the local community. Although tourism development falls beyond the scope of this paper, recognising the tourism industry as a crucial player within the country's economy is paramount.

There are pros and cons associated with travel and tourism that are negatively affecting government. The following section will dwell on migration effect in the tourism sector.

MIGRATION FACTORS AFFECTING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Migration involves some activities that are prone the tourism industry, such as moving from one place to another and using the transportation systems. Nonetheless, researchers are increasingly acknowledging that flexible forms of migration are undermining the distinction between tourism and migration (O'Reilly, 2003). Tourism is defined by Fayissa et al., (2008, p. 807), as "a catalyst for economic and social development as it tends to have a large effect in terms of poverty alleviation, the creation of employment and small businesses for entrepreneurs." Work by Williams and Hall (2010), identify tourism and migration as two social phenomena that overlap one another. They juxtapose the causal relationship of tourism and migration through definitions.

According to Williams and Hall cited in O'Reilly (2003), there are five form of tourism-informed mobility: labour migration; entrepreneurial migration; return (labour) migration; consumption-led economically migration and retirement migration. Migration has become a new "normal life" (O'Reilly, 2007). Moufakkir (2014) quoted Peter (2008) that tourism and migration are two of the most significant manifestations of globalisation. Globalisation which is an outpost of capitalism is concerned with profit maximisation and a minimalistic state, whose role is to create a suitable and conducive environment for business to thrive

Literature indicates that there is a link between tourism and migration. Tourists usually consume a bundle of goods and services while travelling and the key elements of such a consumption bundle may be identified in five broad commodity groups: accommodation, food, transportation, shopping and entertainment" Divisekera (2010, p631). Therefore, tourism can be a catalyst for other industries and sectors, for example, an increase in tourism can lead to greater demand for construction. A country such as Australia remains an established educational tourism destination, whilst Dubai, in addition to

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